kakadu™
NATIONAL PARK

WALKS

Anbangbang

1

A billabong, paperbark swamps, fringing woodlands and sandstone plateau scrub feature along the Anbangbang Billabong and Nawurlandja lookout walks.

Bininj used the plants in these habitats for food, tools, weapons, shelter, decoration, musical instruments and medicine. Some plants are also part of Bininj 'calendars'.

Calendar plants signal changing seasons and show Bininj when certain animals are ready to hunt and eggs are ready to collect.

2

1 View of Nourlangie from the Anbangbang Billabong walk

2 In the creation era male and female badbong, short-eared rock wallabies, travelled through this area and cut two crevices in Nawurlandja

3 Brolga are sometimes seen at Anbangbang Billabong

CREATING THE LAND

In the creation era, spirit beings travelled over the landscape creating the landforms and features.

This is a story about a place on Nawurlandja called Badbong Bawardedjobgeng (bud-bong barwaddy-jobgeng), the place where the wallaby cut the rock.

Two badbong (short-eared rock wallabies), one male and one female, travelled through the area in the creation era. They moved from the northeast and up into the rocks at Nawurlandja cutting two crevices in the rock – the large one by the male and the smaller one by the female.

They travelled together through the woodlands forming the creek which flows from Nawurlandja then went north parting the trees to form Anbangbang Billabong.

Today these animals are common in the area. They can sometimes be seen in the cooler parts of the day at badbong bawardedjobgeng and drinking from the pools below the crevices, where water remains until late in the dry season.

3

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PARK NOTE

PAPERBARK SWAMP

The main paperbarks in Kakadu are the weeping paperbark (*Melaleuca leucadendra*), silver-leaved paperbark (*M. argentea*) and broad-leaved paperbark (*M. viridiflora*). The paperbarks provide shelter for many visitors. Feel the soft, papery bark of these trees.

Bininj use the bark for bedding, bandages, shelter, rafts, temporary containers, and cooking. Some paperbark leaves are used as flavouring in cooking.

FRESHWATER MANGROVE

Freshwater mangroves (*Barringtonia acutangula*) line the edges of billabongs and rivers and are never far from permanent water. Bininj pound the bark of freshwater mangroves to make a poison to stun fish. Their flowers signal that it is time to collect freshwater mussels. Watch out for caterpillars on this tree – they can cause severe skin irritation.

WATER BIRDS

Anbangbang Billabong is habitat for many species of waterbird. Different birds have different features to help them catch their food.

Pelicans catch large fish in their enormous bills as they paddle through the water.

Darters have long necks that dart forward to spear fish on sharply-pointed beaks.

Long-legged spoon bills wade through the shallows sifting small aquatic animals from the water with their long spoon-shaped bills.

With short bills magpie geese can eat sedges and grasses and dig up bulbs. Their partially webbed feet enable them to both perch in trees and swim.

4 The Anbangbang and Nawurlandja walks have spectacular views of Nourlangie

5 Paperbark swamp s fringe billabongs

6 Darters spear fish with their pointed beaks

7 Pelicans dip their bills into the water to catch fish

8 When ripe, kapok fruits turn brown and open to release seeds covered by a 'cotton' with many uses

9 Spoonbills sift small animals out of the water

10 The feet of magpie geese are only partially webbed so they can roost in trees

BILLABONG

Anbangbang Billabong is filled by runoff from Nawurlandja and Nourlangie and the overflow from Nourlangie Creek. It is cut off from its sources during dry periods.

When water levels rise during the wet, aquatic plants grow and feed many species of fish and other aquatic animals. As water gradually recedes and evaporates during the dry, this shallow billabong attracts waterbirds. The water also attracts dingoes, wallabies and woodland birds.

Bininj women wade through the billabong plunging long sticks into the water seeking file snakes and long-necked turtles. Children collect water lilies to eat. Men hunt magpie geese, wallabies and goannas.

FRINGING WOODLANDS

Woodlands have more species of plants and animals than any of Kakadu's other habitats. Much of the woodland wildlife is either nocturnal or only active in the cooler parts of the day. Look carefully for animal tracks and scats (droppings).

The Darwin woollybutt (*Euclayptus miniata*) and Darwin stringybark (*E. tetradonta*) dominate the woodland trees. Bininj used the stringybark to make canoes, shelters, didgeridoos and digging, fighting and dance sticks.

In the middle storey there are fan palms (*Livistona humilis*), kapok (*Cochlospermum fraseri*), red apples (*Syzigium suborbiculare*), wattle (*Acacia spp.*) and pandanus (*Pandanus spiralis*).

Pandanus leaves are used for weaving. Many of the local woven artefacts are made from these leaves. Pandanus seeds are eaten raw and roasted.

The cotton wool-like material around kapok seeds is used for body decoration, the yellow flowers eaten and the bark used to make string and paint brushes.

A small, yellow-flowered wet season herb, *Cleome viscosa,* was used to treat colds, headaches, rheumatism, sores, ulcers, fever and diarrhoea.

Over half of Kakadu is covered by woodland. Seasonal burning has been part of the landscape for thousands of years and most woodland plants are adapted to fire.

SANDSTONE PLATEAU

Nawurlandja is a sandstone outlier with species typical of stone country. This habitat is home to endemic species, like the chestnut-quilled rock-pigeon and the elusive short-eared rock wallaby.

Resurrection grass (*Micraira sp*) grows in hollows where soil collects. This plant appears dead in the dry season, but comes to life at the start of the wet season, forming a thick green mat.

The sandstone pandanus (*Pandanus basedowii*) has distinctive prop roots and a growth habit quite different to the two lowland pandanus species. Figs (*Ficus spp.*) send their roots spreading all over the rocks as they seek moisture and provide support.

During the wet season, the stone country provided Bininj with shelter and painting sites. Bininj also hunt and gather stone country foods when the lowlands are flooded. Bush currants (*Buchanania arborescens*), rock and sandpaper figs (*Ficus spp.*) are collected and eaten along with nectar from Dryander's grevillea (*Grevillea dryandri*).

ANBANGBANG BILLABONG WALK

(dry season only)

Distance: 2.5 km

Time: 1 hour return

Grade: Easy

Start: Nawurlandja parking area or Anbangbang Billabong parking area

Follow the yellow-tipped posts around Anbangbang Billabong to see lilies, waterbirds and stunning views of Burrunggui (Nourlangie Rock).

NAWURLANDJA LOOKOUT WALK

(open all year)

Distance: 600 metres return

Time: 30 minutes return

Grade: moderate slope

Start: Nawurlandja parking area

Follow the orange arrows up Nawurlandja to enjoy views across to Nourlangie and the escarpment.

CROCODILE SAFETY

This area is known estuarine (saltwater) crocodile habitat. Do not enter the water under any circumstances

LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

Do not approach or interfere with any wildlife

Protect yourself from the sun - wear a hat and cover up with loose, light clothing

Protect yourself from biting insects - cover up with loose clothing

WHEN WALKING

Keep to marked tracks

Wear sturdy footwear

Carry and drink plenty of water

Carry a First Aid Kit

Avoid walking in the heat of the day

LOOK AFTER THE PARK

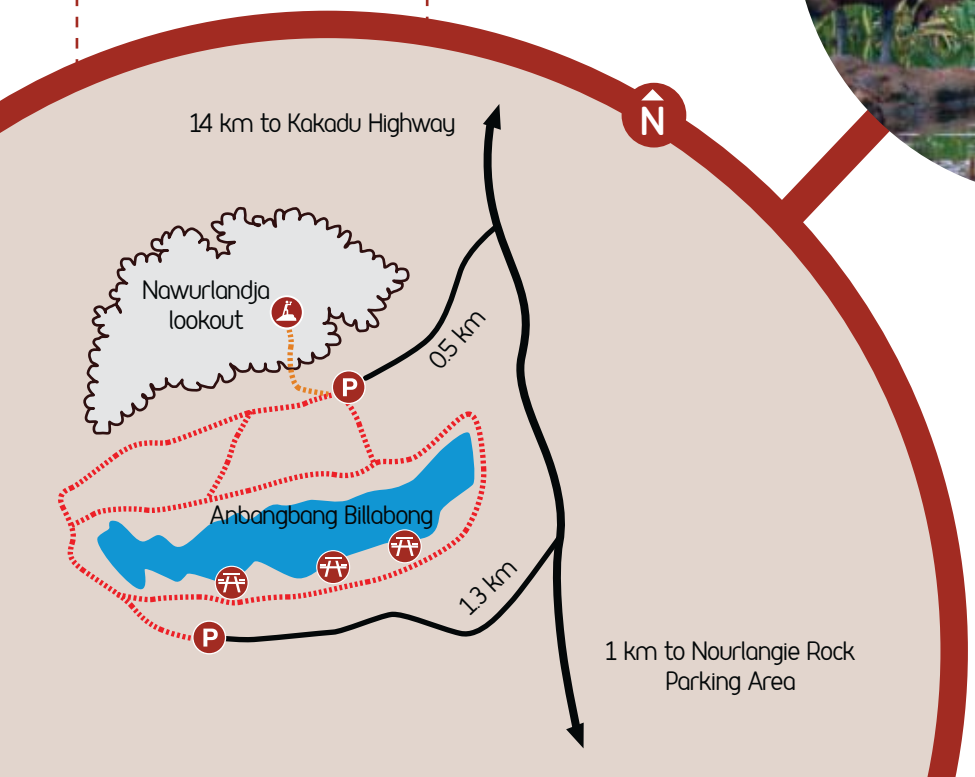
Carry out your rubbish, including cigarette butts, fruit peel and tissues

Observe and enjoy the wildlife, but do not disturb or feed them

Legend

- Carpark
- Lookout
- Picnic Tables
- Anbangbang Billabong walk
- Nawurlandja Lookout walk

11 Wandering whistling ducks use their bills to strip aquatic seeds and flowers



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